

Tricky conversations: behaviours and body odours in the waitroom

No 1 tip: slow down and use a warm tone. We want to avoid the client interpreting the message as judgment or disgust. Slowing down and oozing warmth will convey a message of care and acceptance.

Client's inappropriate behaviours

- Remind yourself of your role in the practice. You are there to help assist the practice to be a welcoming and safe place for all people who enter including you. A good guide/ team member does not ignore problematic behaviours that will make others feel unsafe or unwelcome but addresses with care. A safe environment requires setting limits where appropriate for everyone's safety and comfort
- It is important to do it with kind firmness in order must protect the therapeutic relationship with the client you need to address.
- Use strong postures and steady your breath if anxious
- Slow down your speech to help you
- Have a practiced script if needed.
- As the therapist to address the waitroom behaviour with the client to reinforce the message.

For example:

Gina, excuse me, I know you are talking on the phone and it's probably important. However, it is very loud and is disrupting the other sessions. Please take the call outside or finish it, It's important that everyone gets to have a session in a quiet environment.

Gina, I can see that your feeling agitated today. I need you to stop tearing up the magazines. Instead, I can give you some of these stressballs to squeeze to keep your hands busy/



Tricky Conversations: behaviours and body odours

When a client has personal hygiene issues

- Remind yourself that a caring guide/ parent doesn't avoid difficult topics that interfere with the relationship.
- As caretakers of the space, admin play a vital role in setting limits where appropriate for everyone who enters the practice comfort.
- Discuss the issue of the hygiene issues on the comfort of the waitroom and cleaning of furniture etc. with the client's therapist.
- Ask the therapist to address with the client. The therapist will understand your concern.
- If the smell is strong, or the other clients seem distressed you may offer for the distressed client to take a seat in a spare consult room or offer them a drink in the kitchen area (if appropriate and safe to do so).

